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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses who will teach American children in the current political environment. Americans consider education a top political priority. The conversation must be moved from campaign rhetoric to real dialogue about education's critical role and the readiness of all schools to help shape the nation. Major trends transforming society influence education, especially globalization, increased consumer power and demands, new worker roles and expectations, changing community demographics, increasing speed of change, technologically mediated learning environments, and radical transformation of the workplace. Future education will occur in nontraditional settings. Teachers need professional development to prepare for education that enables students to develop analytical, reasoning, organizational, and synthesizing skills for taking advantage of today's social, political, and economic opportunities. Education must appropriately handle increasingly diverse student populations and prepare a more diverse teacher pool. More effective strategies for attracting, recruiting, preparing, and retaining high quality teachers, counselors, and administrators are needed. To improve student performance, there must be greater attention to improving the classroom practice. All children and teachers must be educated to build and sustain a civil society predicated on bridging divides. The Holmes Partnership includes a critical component of the leadership needed to foster this dialogue. (Contains 24 references.) (SM)

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"WHO WILL TEACH ALL CHILDREN?"

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AT THE
HOLMES PARTNERSHIP 5th ANNUAL CONFERENCE
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M.H. Futrell

"I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past." *
President Thomas Jefferson

I have been asked to talk about "Who will teach all children?" I would like to expand the topic to include "all students," which would encompass higher education as well as those in pre – K through high school. And, what I would like to do is ask you to join me in thinking about the topic within the context of the current political environment.

The American people in poll after poll during this presidential campaign indicated that, whether at the national, state, or local levels of our government, they wanted the issue of education to be a top priority. People asked what the candidates would do to address such issues as improving the quality of education, keeping our schools safe, alleviating teacher shortages, and increasing accountability for schools. And, they raised questions about how the candidates would improve access to education, be it pre-school or graduate school.

We must help find answers to those questions. More specifically, our task now is to sustain as a priority in the national political agenda the importance of the need for continued and increased support for education, including the preparation and continued professional development of teachers. Our task is to move the conversation from that of campaign rhetoric and sloganeering to a real dialogue about the critical role of education and the readiness of our schools, colleges, and universities to continue to be a major factor in shaping the future of our nation. Why? Because we all know that ensuring a quality teacher in every classroom, for example, is more than just addressing the need for equal opportunity. It is about ensuring maximum development of the potential of each person and expanding opportunities. It is about efforts to enhance social justice and the quality of life; to encourage respect for differences and diversity. It is also about ensuring the economic success and social viability of our nation. Thus, we need a voice, a sustained dialogue that focuses on the hope for and the potential of our educational systems, not simply the problems.

As a people, we understand the importance of education for our future as a nation. Given this understanding, we must be hopeful that President Bush, policymakers, and the public will be more willing in the coming decade to

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understand the impact of societal changes that will affect education. We as a nation must be willing to invest the resources necessary to assure that the nation's goals are met and our aspirations fulfilled. As my colleagues Mike Marquardt and Nancy Berger stated recently, "To achieve these goals and aspirations and goals, we also have to acknowledge the major trends transforming our society, especially higher education". We are all familiar with those forces: globalization and the global economy, increased power and demands of the consumer, new roles and expectations of workers, changing demographics of communities, and the increasing speed of change. Forces like technologically mediated learning environments, the emergence of knowledge and learning as a country's greatest asset, and the radical transformation of the workplace also have serious implications for education and schooling.

Education in the future, as we are evidencing now, will not simply occur within the confines of the traditional classroom. Increasingly it will occur in a variety of settings, some of which will be virtual. To better educate students, whether they are learning in traditional or non-traditional environments, we must improve the preparation and professional development of all educators. At the same time, society needs to acknowledge that learning is a lifelong challenge, as well as a lifelong process. Therefore, our system of education must enable learners to develop the analytical, reasoning, organizational, and synthesizing skills that they need to take full advantage of the social, political, and economic opportunities that will be available to all. The education that students acquire must enable them to apply their knowledge and skills in a dramatically changing society. It also must enable our students to build on these skills to meet the needs of workplaces that are increasingly porous, transcending borders and redefining themselves. We need to enable students to understand that not only will their work and work environments be different, but that their neighbors and workplace colleagues may or may not be from their communities.

Who are these students? The old cliches about America as a "melting pot" or a "great checkerboard" are no longer appri pro. Rather, we are a wonderful mix of cultures and races, old and new immigrants, exceptionalities and experiences. In America today 53,000,000 children (a number expected to reach 55,000,000 before the end of the decade) are in our elementary and secondary schools. Thirty-five per cent of today's children are from language and racial minority groups. That figure is expected to increase to 40% by the year 2010. And, if current demographic trends continue, it is projected to reach 51% by 2050. But, let's stick with 2010, a year when most people in this room I hope will still be around. By 2010, 60% of 6 to 16-year-old students will be white, 17% will be African American, 20% will be Hispanic, 5% Asian, and 2% Native American. Today, approximately 25% of all school-aged children live in poverty. Further, today, one-third of all African-American and Hispanic students attend schools that have 90% or more minority enrollment. Many of these schools offer substandard education and are ill-equipped to prepare students for the technological renaissance that is defining the world.

Concomitantly, over the next 15 years, according to the Educational Testing Service college enrollments are projected to swell by 2,000,000 students to 19,000,000 with African-, Hispanic-, and Asian-American students accounting for 80% of the growth. Hispanic-American enrollments will increase to 15%, African-American to 13%, and Asian-American to 8%. Enrollments for white Americans are expected to decline to 63%, down from 71%.

As part of our conversation regarding who will teach America's students, we must also address the issue of what we will teach them. The quality of education provided students at all levels of the system will be a central factor in helping us achieve the goal of a unified, but multicultural society. Speaking of teaching, universities will continue to play a critical role in preparing primary and secondary teachers not only to teach students to achieve at higher levels but also in helping future teachers understand, respect, and teach students from diverse backgrounds. I agree with Darling-Hammond, Wise, and Klein, who said that, "If all children are to be effectively taught, teachers must be prepared to address the substantial diversity in experiences children bring with them to school—the wide range of languages, cultures, exceptionalities, learning styles, talents, and intelligences that in turn requires a varied repertoire of teaching strategies. . . . teaching for universal learning will demand that teachers have a highly developed ability to discover what children know and can do, as well as how they think and how they learn, ..."

We have all heard the projection that by the end of this decade America must find 2,000,000 new teachers. Studies also show that we will need to replace about 45% of the nation's school administrators. And, approximately the same percentage of the professoriate will leave. These vacancies will represent approximately half of the teaching profession and will come at a time when the challenges facing America could not be greater, especially the challenge of our diversity.

Where will we find enough highly qualified teachers, counselors, and administrators to teach and to be the leaders of efforts to transform our education systems? How will we attract the next generation of the teaching profession, including the professoriate? Very few people are discussing that aspect of the pending shortage of educators in America. I'll come back to that point in a moment.

We need to develop more effective strategies for attracting, recruiting, preparing, and retaining high-quality cadres of teachers, counselors, and administrators. I believe that it is critical for schools of education, school districts and state departments of education to address one of the greatest challenges facing the profession: attracting more academically talented candidates into the profession, especially more teachers from minority groups. Nearly a third of school-age children in the United States are members of minority groups, compared with about 12% of teachers. Although I doubt seriously that the teaching profession will ever truly reflect the diversity that defines our student population, more concerted

efforts must be made to attract candidates from minority groups into the profession. Limited diversity within the teaching population means that all teachers must develop the ability to work with culturally diverse students. In other words, I am strongly advocating for increasing diversity at every level within the teaching profession, at the same time recognizing that what every teacher does in the classroom must be paramount to enhancing educational excellence for all students.

Every year it becomes more difficult to attract talented students into teaching, even when they have successfully completed all of the certification requirements. The number one reason people, including minorities, do not go into teaching is family discouragement and lack of financial support. A second reason is competition from other professions that successfully recruit our graduates. Other disincentives include the lack of respect afforded teaching, unsafe environments due to lack of discipline in the classroom, poor working conditions, and poor pay.

Allow me to digress for just a moment. People often cite the Japanese and Singaporean educational systems as models of excellence. Rarely, however, do they talk about how much the teachers in those two countries are paid. The average teacher in Japan and Singapore earns $80,000 per year. If we paid the average teacher in America $80,000 or even $70,000 a year, I guarantee you that we would not have a shortage of teachers. We would have a surplus!

Let me focus for just a moment on recruiting more minorities into the profession. Recruiting minority students will require systemic changes such as:

- Improving K-12 education for minority students so that more can meet the standards to successfully complete their college education, and subsequently to enhance their ability to pass state certification requirements to become teachers. First of all, we need to dispel the myth that Hispanic-American, African-American, and students from economically poor families will not take or cannot succeed in AP or other advanced placement classes. Yes, they will and yes they can. The question is the willingness of schools to open those classes to minority students and train more teachers to teach AP classes.

  Allow me to explain what I mean by using the AP program as an example. All of us are aware of the fact that the AP program, which is overseen by the College Board and includes nationally standardized course curricula, does not include many minority students. For example, of the roughly 750,000 students who took more than 1.2 million AP exams last year, only 36,000--less than 5%--were African-American. Overall, minority students accounted for only 27 % of AP test takers. Hispanic and African-American students, in particular, need to take more academic courses, including AP courses, which will prepare them for college work and give them credit for college courses taken.

- Enhance financial-aid options for aspiring teachers, such as college scholarships or "forgivable" loans, which, by the way, is how yours truly paid for her college education.

- Having completed the requirements to become a teacher, new teachers should be inducted into the profession through programs specifically designed for that purpose. States and school districts should work together to define, implement, and fully fund induction programs for all beginning teachers, including training mentor teachers to advise and support novices.

We all know that good teaching matters. What we have not done is guarantee that every single child in America has access to good teachers, good teaching, and environments that will encourage not discourage learning.

Someone recently asked me what characteristics I looked for in a good teacher. I responded by saying that a good teacher, I believe, is someone who knows his or her subject area, has a strong repertoire of strategies she uses to teach, and likes teaching. A good teacher is a person who holds each student to high standards, and is truly committed to working with his or her students regardless of w o they are or from whence they come. Every teacher who enters a classroom in America must be prepared to teach our diverse student population. Every teacher must be prepared to help students learn and insist that students meet the new standards required by states and local communities—not simply for the sake of passing the test, but for each student's own personal and professional future.

More studies than any of us in this room could list have concluded that for students to meet high academic standards, the quality of the teaching force needs to be improved. Yes, we do need to attract more academically gifted students into our teacher preparation programs who will be able to demonstrate mastery of the pedagogy and content areas they will teach. But, you and I know that in too many instances the answer from policymakers to the teacher-shortage issue is to simply place a live body in the classroom. If there were a shortage of airplane pilots, we would not have flight attendants fly people across the country. We do, however, have people who are not qualified to teach in our classrooms developing the minds of our young people. For policymakers at any level of our government to call for higher academic standards and, yet, staff classrooms with individuals uncertified to teach, is oxymoronic. All of us in the Holmes Partnership should join together and insist that no classroom in America should be staffed with persons who are not certified to teach.

On the issue of professional development, I recently learned that although 99% of practicing teachers acknowledged having received at least one or two days of professional development training each year, only about 30% received professional development training in topics involving responsiveness to differences in the student population (namely dealing with cultural diversity, limited English proficiency, and special needs). An even smaller percentage indicated confidence

about the professional development training that they had received to assist them in helping students meet the academic standards mandated by the state.

Studies show that the types of professional development training teachers receive will influence their attitudes toward and aspirations for the students they teach. If we are to improve student performance greater attention needs to be paid to improving the classroom practice aspects of teacher quality, followed by professional development tailored to those practices. If that training is rich and sustained, teachers are more apt to have higher expectations for all of their students and to use higher order thinking skills and concrete activities more effectively as part of their classroom practice.

The Holmes Partnership continues to be one of the most active and sustained voices in the education reform movement calling for programs that prepare teachers to help ensure that every child is taught to the best of his or her ability. The Holmes Partnership is to be applauded for keeping the goal of diversity within the teaching profession as one of its priorities. Nowhere is that commitment more visible than in our own Holmes Scholars program. Holmes is also to be applauded for breaking the mold and advocating that more of that learning should occur in collaborative-learning environments called professional development schools.

Toward that end, I think of the work being done in Maryland by a partnership consisting of the Montgomery County Public School District (MD), the Montgomery County Education Association, and George Washington University to implement a new district-wide peer-mentoring program. Together these three partners developed and implemented the program, which is now in its first year of operation. Every school has a mentor who works with his or her peers as a staff development resource person. The goal is to mentor new and experienced teachers, especially those who need to strengthen their teaching skills or want to try new techniques, as they strive to teach our increasingly diverse student population.

I also think about the project developed in Virginia by the Capital Educators Partnership. The Fairfax County Public School District, the National Education Association and its affiliates, and George Washington University have joined together to implement a unique support program for teachers at Riverside Elementary Professional Development Center. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is also working with us on this project. Riverside Elementary School is composed of a rich diversity of approximately 400 students. The student body is ranked academically as low-performing.

Four nationally certified teachers and one counselor seeking national certification have been placed at Riverside. The project, which was conceived by a nationally certified teacher, Carol Horn, is designed to provide on site support for teachers seeking national certification and to model exemplary teaching methodologies. The nationally certified teachers co-teach part of the day and mentor teachers seeking national certification during the remainder of the day.

They also work with student teachers who have been assigned to the school by the University. So far, 17 of the 31 teachers in the school have indicated that they will seek National Board certification. Again, our goal is to support teachers and, thus, to enhance student learning.

These are but two examples of school districts, colleges and universities, and teachers unions coming together to improve the quality of education in our schools. These are learning opportunities for all of us as each partner with its unique contribution strives to improve teaching and learning in these communities. They are examples of taking the leadership in efforts to work together, to try bold new ideas, to capitalize on the diverse talents of each partner, and to create collaborative learning environments where the goal is to find better, more effective ways to teach our children.

As we and other Holmes Partnership members venture forward with ideas for working together collaboratively, we are also doing something else. We are beginning to transform the teaching profession. Through the kind of initiatives I just described and many others in which you are involved, we are beginning to redefine who teachers are and what they do. Together, we are experimenting with new roles for teachers as leaders, mentors, peer evaluators, staff development providers, researchers, trainers, advocates, and, most of all, as exemplary teachers. Through voluntary implementation of initiatives, such as the national certification process, we are beginning to see the development of differentiated staffing and differentiated salary schedules for teachers. Through the empowerment of individuals, namely teachers, the engendering of trust, and collaborative efforts to implement change, teaching and the teaching profession are being quietly transformed.

Leadership for the types of solutions I am proposing requires that state and local policymakers, colleges and universities, and teachers' organizations work together to support efforts to ensure that those who teach our children today and tomorrow represent the very best candidates this nation can produce. It also means supporting efforts to ensure that every child attends schools that are fully staffed with certified teachers and fully equipped to ensure that their educational experiences will be maximized. In other words, poor children should have the same opportunities to achieve academically, the same supportive learning environments as children who live in more affluent school districts. Their communities, parents, and teachers should accept no less. Educational excellence must not be a goal for some. It must be a goal for all.

A recent study regarding parents' attitudes about the education of their children found that regardless of race, ethnicity, or socio-economic class, all stated that the most important goal for schools is academic achievement for their children. These parents insist that nothing divert attention from their overriding concern of ensuring that their children receive a solid education. Efforts to fulfill this goal will require leadership involving the entire university, not just schools of education, and all of the teaching profession. As part of that effort, perhaps this is the time for us

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to join together to support the development of pre-kindergarten through 16 educational goals, including defining what we mean by a seamless system of education, and developing new incentives to make the salaries of educators more comparable with what members of other professions earn.

Throughout the political campaign, candidate Bush promised to leave no child behind. Now is the opportune time for him to show true "compassion" and to ensure that every single child indeed has the opportunity to and will receive a quality education. On Tuesday, President Bush announced his legislative program for education, his first priority. Although, the President has his own education agenda, I hope that he will continue some of the education initiatives which have been before Congress. After all, it is the quality of the ideas that matter rather than their sources.

To-date, Congress has funded 29,000 of the 100,000 teachers needed to reduce class size throughout America. I hope that President Bush will provide the resources to hire the 71,000 additional teachers communities need, thus meeting the goal of 100,000 new teachers. I hope that he will continue efforts to provide federal funds to help communities upgrade existing schools and to build new ones where necessary and equip them with the latest technology. I hope that he will continue providing federal funds to support the work of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. And, further, I hope that early on in his administration, President Bush will provide resources to help us identify and support academically talented students early in their educational pursuits so that they can have the financial means to go to college.

President Bush will have opportunities over the course of the next four years to keep his promises to the American people, including responding to the critical issue of who will teach all of America's students. To do so, the President must be prepared and willing to work with members of Congress, state legislatures, the public at-large, and members of the teaching profession if we, as a nation, are indeed to afford every American an opportunity to receive a quality education. President Bush must be able to help persuade the American people to have the political and financial will to support transformations in education if we are to achieve this goal. To do this, all segments of the American people must work together to ensure that "no child is left behind", or I should say "no student is left behind".

Leadership must also be demonstrated within the teaching profession. The leaders of our educational institutions, especially the administrators of our colleges and universities, must lead by example and be prepared to face a new era of challenges. For instance, a question that may surface in higher education is one that is constantly being raised in public schools, the issue of accountability. It is already surfacing in conjunction with schools of education and our graduates. We see it in the form of increased testing for those who seek to become teachers. We also see it in the new requirements where colleges and universities must report their teacher preparation program student pass-fail rates on the Praxis exam. And, we see it in

the new standards-based curriculum, testing, and accountability systems that are being implemented in virtually all of the 50 states for our K – 12 schools and, by way of association, colleges and universities. How have and will these new mandates along with the state requirements regarding high-stakes testing for students re-define how schools of education prepare teachers, counselors, administrators, and other school personnel? How will these challenges cause the professoriate to change how it functions; how it serves its students? These are difficult questions, but they are ones that we must answer. One thing is certain, however, schools of education, like school districts, will not be able to implement changes to prepare teachers and other educational personnel to better educate future generations unless we have the resources to transform ourselves to be better prepared for the educational challenges ahead.

And, one of those resources is faculty. We know, however, that all too often those who teach our students have limited cross-cultural experiences and understandings. Therefore, the ability of teacher education programs to inculcate an understanding of diversity and equity among prospective teachers has proven to be problematic. I submit that it is a problem we can no longer afford.

Allow me for just a moment to reflect on the professoriate. It must be the goal of each institution of higher education to attract the most talented and academically prepared faculty to their campuses. A university should also have a goal of assuring that its faculty reflects a diversity of racial and ethnic groups, gender, opinions, and backgrounds. Currently, fewer than 5% of all higher-education faculty members are from racial minority groups. To correct this situation, more should be done to attract and recruit new faculty who reflect the pluralism that defines America. In addition, more must be done to mentor new faculty to enable them to successfully complete the tenure and promotion criteria, to become long-term members of the professoriate.

What we do or do not do to address the issue of enhancing the quality of the teaching profession, including the professoriate, has implications for all of education. I believe that all of us must accept the fact that students will increasingly define where and what they want to learn. Therefore, we must learn to work together to establish greater expectations not only for students but also for all of academia. Just having higher expectations, however, is not enough.

We have entered an era when the old education 20th century paradigm may not work in the twenty-first century. We must be willing to change our paradigm to determine if there are better, more effective ways to educate today's students and future generations of students. What we do know is that the quality of education we provide will shape the future of this nation. The education the current generation of students receives will continue to influence the aspirations and potential of our children and our grandchildren. Toward that end, colleges and universities, state and local policymakers, and teachers' organizations must be ready to work with President Bush, Secretary of Education Paige, Congress, and the community at

large to ensure that all Americans have access to the best education this nation can provide.

If we are going to build and sustain a civil society predicated on bridging divides, we must start by educating our children and ourselves on how to do so. A critical component of the leadership needed to foster that dialogue is seated here in this room—the Holmes Partnership.

As leaders of education reform, the members of the Holmes Partnership have already helped define the education agenda for the 21st century. In keeping with its mission, the Holmes Partnership is playing a significant role in shaping the future of education on the campuses of the nearly 1200 schools of education and in the 15,000 school districts scattered across America. Today, we, the Holmes Partnership, have the opportunity and an obligation to continue to be the voice for changes in our education system—changes which will lead to assurances that we will do all in our power to make sure that only the best, most qualified teachers teach America's children, thus guaranteeing that no child will be left behind. The Holmes Partnership has committed itself to helping America fulfill its mission to have the best-educated citizenry on the face of the earth. Quality education is society's best investment in our shared future.

You and I have an opportunity and an obligation to re-ignite the dialogue, to be a major voice in the deliberative process that will help build bridges to close the educational, racial, political, and economic divides. We have an opportunity at last to enable America to realize all of her potential from all of her people.

Who will teach America's children? We will! You and I and the teachers, counselors, administrators, and teacher educators we prepare for tomorrow's schools.

Thank you!

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